### 4.1.7 Irretrievable and Irreversible Commitment of Resources

Construction of any of the Detailed Study Alternatives would require certain irreversible and irretrievable commitments of natural resources, manpower, materials, and fiscal resources. Lands within the right-of-way would be converted from their present use to transportation use. Use of these lands is considered an irreversible commitment during the time period that the land is used for a highway facility. However, if a greater need arises for use of the land or if the highway facility is no longer needed, the land can be converted to another use. At present, there is no reason to believe such a conversion would ever be necessary or desirable.

Considerable amounts of fossil fuels, labor, and highway construction materials, such as cement, aggregate, and bituminous material, would be expended to build the proposed project. Additionally, large amounts of labor and natural resources would be used in the fabrication and preparation of construction materials. These materials are generally not retrievable. However, they are not in short supply and their use would not have an adverse effect upon continued availability of these resources. Any construction would also require a substantial one-time expenditure of State funds that is not retrievable.

Construction of the proposed US 17 improvement project would increase the utility of a critical regional transportation system. The facility will provide safer, more efficient travel in and across Jones and Onslow Counties. Widening will allow the corridor to function as a part of the Intrastate System, the Strategic Highway Corridor Network (STRAHNET), and the North Carolina Strategic Highway Corridor System. Additionally, the facility serves as a hurricane evacuation route and the increased efficiency will benefit evacuees in the event of hurricanes.

The irretrievable commitment of resources caused by the proposed project would be balanced by the anticipated benefits to the communities and region. The project is consistent with the state and local goals of improving transportation service in the region.

### 4.1.8 Relationship Between Long-Term and Short-Term Uses / Benefits

The most disruptive local short-term impacts associated with the proposed project would occur during land acquisition and project construction. The short-term use of the environment and of human, socioeconomic, cultural, and natural resources contributes to the long-term productivity of the study area. Most short-term, construction-related impacts would occur within or in close proximity to the proposed right-of-way.

Existing homes, farms, and businesses within the selected alternative's right-of-way would be displaced. However, adequate replacement housing, land, and space are available for homeowners, tenants, and business owners within the study area (see Section A.4.1.2).